DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 067 499 VT 016 719

TITLE	Part-Time Social Workers in Public Welfare.
INSTITUTION	Catalyst, New York, N. Y.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C.; Spaulding-Potter Trust, Concord, N.H.
PUB DATE	Oct 71
NOTE	63p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Caseworkers; *College Graduates; Community Agencies (Public); *Demonstration Projects; Feasibility Studies; Females; Human Services; *Part Time Jobs; Program Evaluation; *Social Workers; Success Factors; Vocational Development; Vocational Education; Welfare Services

ABSTRACT

A demonstration project in Boston, Massachusetts, designed to meet critical needs in public service by providing part-time jobs for able women with families, chose 50 mature women college graduates from over 1,500 who were interested and 173 who were interviewed. Working half-time for 2 years in the State Department of Public Welfare, they performed exceptionally well, carrying an average of 42 family cases compared to an average of 78 cases by the full timers, with 89 percent as many personal contacts--fewer home contacts, but more telephone and office contacts. The attrition rate was 14 percent, about one third that of the full-timers, due to their maturity, commitment, and other personal factors. A 6-month feasibility study following a national survey developed recruiting procedures and chose a site for the program which was sponsored by Catalyst, a national non-profit educational service organization. The typical woman recruit was a 45-year-old mother with three teenage children and an annual family income of between $15,000 and $20,000. This differed from the full-timers, who were 29.4 years old on the average, 32 percent of whom were married. Professional training and program acceptance by the full-timers insured its success and helped make flexible job scheduling for women an accepted practice. (AG)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED 067499

Report prepared by
CATALYST
6 East 82nd Street, New York, N. Y. 10028

October 1971

Catalyst Board of Directors

Thomas C. Mendenhall, Chairman — President, Smith College

Bernard Barnes, Secretary-Treasurer
Vice President & Secretary, retired, TIME, Inc.

Verne S. Atwater — President, Central Savings Bank

Emily Chervenik, Coordinator,
University of Wisconsin Placement Services

Martha R. Coles (Mrs. James Stacy Coles)

Howard O. Colgan, Jr., Partner — Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy

Frances Kennedy
Senior Vice President, Dancer-Fitzgerald-Sample, Inc.

Douglas M. Knight — Vice President for Educational Development, RCA

Virginia S. Newton
Study Director, Institute for Educational Development

Mary E. O'Meara — Vice President, retired, Young & Rubicam, Inc.

Martha Peterson — President, Barnard College

Alan Simpson — President, Vassar College

Catalyst National Staff

Felice N. Schwartz, President

Margaret H. Schifter, Vice President

Susan S. Gillotti, Director of Research

Elizabeth H. Steltenpohl, Director of Education

Joanne B. Leeds, Staff Assistant

Catalyst Social Work Committee

Ernest Witte, Dean, College of Social Professions, University of Kentucky

Albert H. Aaronson, Director, Division of State Merit Systems, Dept. of HEW - retired

Mary R. Baker, Personnel Director, Family Service Association of America

Guy R. Justis, Director, American Public Welfare Association

Joseph Reid, Executive Director, Child Welfare League of America, Inc.

Corinne H. Wolfe, Deputy Ass't Administrator, Office of Manpower Development and Training, Dept. of HEW

Catalyst Project Staff

Mrs. Ruth Malenka, Project Director

Mrs. Pamela McClain, Community Relations Director

Mrs. Patricia Desmond, Secretary

(The Project Director and Secretary worked half time; the Community Relations Director worked an equivalent of one day a week.)

Catalyst Training Staff

Mrs. Millicent Hill, Mrs. Ruth Sears, Mrs. Evelyn Lees,

Mrs. Anne Gerber, Mrs. Sophie Loewenstein, Mrs. Mildred Flashman,

Mrs. Ruth Sidel and Mrs. Muriel Finegold

(Each of the above worked one day per week during one year of the project)

Catalyst, a national non-profit educational service organization, was founded in 1962 with the dual purpose of alleviating society's need for able personnel and ending the conspicuous waste of the training of educated women. Many of the country's 5-½ million female college graduates are not working merely because traditional employment patterns prevent them from combining family and careers. The organization's nine years of research and demonstration projects have provided ample evidence that, if offered part-time jobs fitted to their educational achievements and experience, these women want to work where they are needed and that, by maturity, motivation, and commitment, they are particularly well equipped to meet critical needs in public service. Catalyst's efforts to make flexible job scheduling for women an accepted practice can, therefore, meet both quantitative and qualitative personnel shortages, benefiting individual women, their employers, and society as a whole.

Acknowledgements

Catalyst is indebted to the Spaulding Potter Charitable Trusts and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare for making this report possible. Catalyst's Board of Directors and staff acknowledge with gratitude the courtesy and cooperation extended by the administrators of the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare and particularly the staff of the Boston Regional office.

The independent evaluation research for this project was conducted by Lawrence Podell, Ph.D. and Alan R. Gruber, Ph.D. The writing of the report was done by Mary O'Meara.

CONTENTS

I. Foreword by Wilbur Cohen.....1

II. Introduction.....5

III. Principal Findings.....10

IV. Feasibility Study.....15

V. Recruiting Part-Time Workers.....20

VI. Orientation and Assimilation.....24

VII. Performance of Part-Time Workers.....29

VIII. Lessons and Guidelines.....33

Appendix A - Welfare Officials.....39

Appendix B - Excerpts.....40

Appendix C - Releases.....50

FOREWORD

The problem of poverty is more complicated than money and cannot be solved by just handing someone a welfare check, essential as that is. Our society is geared to a variety of economic and psychological incentives and we have to have a package plan, one which includes income and training and jobs and the kind of educational process that teaches people how to use money, how to budget, how to live in an urban society, how to get a child into a day care facility or deal with one who is having problems in school, how to prevent unplanned pregnancies and how to make one's way in getting needed services. Unless this kind of education and opportunity exists, poverty will continue to undermine morale and initiative and perpetuate itself in succeeding generations.

What better person to help welfare clients than one who, through experience, has gained understanding of these problems and practice in their pragmatic solution, one who is mature enough to work with the poor with equanimity and to tolerate the frustrations of the seemingly endless obstacles of inadequate facilities, overcrowded housing and the red tape of a bureaucratic system.

The Catalyst Project with the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare has shown us how to find this kind of person, the educated wife and mother who wants to work, to be of service, to use her education well, who has the stability to handle difficult situations, the motivation to stay with what she is doing, the life experience to relate to her clients and help them use the resources of a community she knows well.

Departments of welfare were generally skeptical about this Project to recruit educated family women for half-time positions as caseworkers and raised a variety of questions. Would the women really leave their relatively comfortable homes in the suburbs and work with the poor? Would they stay? How would their clients react to them and handle the times when they were not available? What would line supervisors feel about the burden of supervising two caseworkers in the place of one? Would these part-timers be able to handle their share of AFDC cases on such a limited schedule?

After almost two years of seeking a department to cooperate in testing the concept, the Boston Regional Office of the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare signed a contract with Catalyst in May, 1968. The Project began and the questions were answered one by one.

The women responded in overwhelming numbers to announcements of the availability of part-time jobs as public welfare caseworkers. They stayed and they proved to be exceptionally fine caseworkers. Their turnover rate was 13% instead of the usual 40%. Their clients, mainly AFDC mothers, found that they had in common with their caseworkers the bond of maternity and were more at ease talking with a contemporary than a very young social worker just out of college.

Even the line supervisors were uniformly pleased because of the quality of the performance of these workers who were punctual, worked diligently during their hours on duty, handled many problems on their own which might, for those with less life experience, have

required help from the supervisors, and in addition had a stabilizing effect on younger members of their staff.

And the productivity of these half-time workers proved the validity of Catalyst's contention that as much or more can be accomplished by two half timers than by one full timer.

Catalyst's Project with the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare has demonstrated the value in public welfare of this largely untapped human resource, the educated family woman who wants to fulfill both home and professional responsibilities and is highly motivated to use her abilities to help others. It would be a waste not to profit from this experience and adopt similar hiring practices in welfare jurisdictions throughout the country. And, as I think of the total picture of health, education and welfare services and the continuing need for persons of judgment, maturity, compassion and ability to staff these services, I can only hope that other part-time opportunities will be created in all these areas, in child welfare as well as in AFDC cases, in early childhood education, in tutoring college students who enter under the open enrollment plan, in helping as part-time specialists to enrich curriculum and advance change in public school teaching, in working with the poor, the delinquent, the afflicted and the aged in their own homes and in institutions.

The needs are enormous but there is a new resource to help -- family women from among the country's 5-1/2 million female college graduates who are only available on part-time schedules. They want to work where they are needed and they have proved their worth in

helping meet the urgent problems of our complex and rapidly changing society.

Wilbur J. Cohen

Dean, School of Education
The University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Secretary of
Health, Education and Welfare, 1968.

INTRODUCTION

Genesis of the Program:

During the 1960's, the shortage of qualified personnel and the high turnover among first-line public welfare workers reached a crisis level. Recruitment and training programs were consuming an ever higher percentage of the budget and of administrative time. Excessive case loads became the rule and aggravated an attrition rate that had reached more than 50% in many urban welfare units.

The current business recession and rising unemployment have alleviated, for the moment, the acute personnel shortage but this situation has also swelled welfare rolls. In addition, public concern has stimulated a review of the entire system for the delivery of public welfare services and assistance payments, and there is a new awareness of the complex and heavy responsibilities of public welfare workers, necessitating an evaluation of their functions, caliber and educational background.

An economic upturn may again create a shortage of workers in the field, but there is nothing in past history to suggest that either the number or needs of the very old and the young, of the disabled and displaced, of the mentally and physically ill, will diminish. It will continue to be the responsibility of government, whether federal, state or city, to meet these needs.

It is estimated that 10,000 public welfare jobs need filling in a normal year. This includes new job openings and vacancies created when workers resign or retire. While neither the bachelor's degree nor the master's in social work is required as a matter of

federal policy, both are desireable preparation for a social worker responsible for the delivery of services. However, less than 3,000 students graduate from all the schools of social work in the country each year and few of these will choose to work for welfare agencies. Today 80% of the social workers in private agencies have M.S.W. degrees compared with only 4.5% of public welfare workers. As the demand for intelligent, efficient, understanding public welfare workers increases, how can it be met?

It is ironic, in the face of this situation, that the United States has an increasing abundance of college-educated women eager for meaningful employment if a way can be found for them to work outside their homes for part of the day or part of the week on a schedule that will permit them to combine family and professional responsibilities. Many of these married women with college degrees are particularly well-equipped for work in public welfare. Their intelligent concern for the well-being of society and their personal experience of managing a home and raising children are special assets.

As a first step toward finding a way to match demand and supply, Catalyst cooperated in 1963 with the Welfare Administration of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare in a survey of the Commissioners of Public Welfare in all 50 states. The aim was to determine their willingness to participate in a demonstration project involving the recruitment, training and part-time employment of married women with college degrees. During the next four years, Catalyst explored with nine different state departments the possibility of working with them before finding a district willing

to undertake indepth investigation of the feasibility of the experiment and with various government agencies and private foundations before finding the necessary funds to conduct the project. Based on further discussions with administrators of the Merit System of HEW and of the state's personnel and civil service agencies, Catalyst developed a proposal to direct such a project in the Boston area for the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare.

Massachusetts Provides Testing Ground

The Director of the Boston Public Welfare Department was in favor of the proposed project. The percentage of citizens on welfare in the City is high and the Boston office also had a severe problem in retaining its first-line caseworkers. Most of its new workers were recent graduates of the many colleges in the vicinity and they tended to leave their work, all too soon, for marriage, maternity or less demanding work. Both the Director and the Deputy Director of the Boston system recognized that mature college graduates who had already married, had their children and established their life patterns might help the Dept. solve certain of its staffing problems. Both acknowledged that part-time employment might create some new problems, but they were convinced that new answers to existing problems had to be found, and they could see that the Catalyst proposal offered just such a possibility. They were joined in support for the proposed project by the Training and Recruitment Supervisor for the State Department of Public Welfare who was a staunch advocate of the proposal and provided considerable help in working out the necessary details. After a study showed the pro-

posal to be feasible, it was accepted by the Commission of the Massachusetts Department of Welfare.

It was agreed that Catalyst would recruit and train 50 half-time caseworkers to fill 25 regular full-time positions and that an independent evaluation of the performance and usefulness of these part-timers compared with full-time employees would be conducted by a competent professional chosen by the sponsoring foundation. It was further agreed that if the project were successful, Catalyst would prepare a report and disseminate it to public welfare administrators throughout the country who might follow the example in their own jurisdictions or use it as a take-off point for further innovation with part-time personnel.

With a grant from The Spaulding-Potter Charitable Trusts of Concord, New Hampshire matched three-to-one with funds from the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the demonstration project was initiated in the spring of 1968. Recruitment began in May and employment in September. Evaluation research[1] was begun in January 1969 and the data from then until May, 1970 served as the basis for the independent evaluation of the project.

Project Findings

Many questions were raised when this project was initially proposed. This report will first summarize the major findings

---

[1] Much of the material that follows is drawn from the Evaluation Research Report submitted to the Spaulding-Potter Charitable Trusts in June 1970 by Dr. Lawrence Podell, Professor of Urban Affairs at City University of New York. Dr. Alan R. Gruber, then on the faculty of Eastern Nazarene College, Quincy, Massachusetts, collaborated in the collection and analysis of relevant data.

of the project and then present some details of the preliminary feasibility study, the methods used to recruit, train and incorporate part-timers into the existing system, and a statistical evaluation of their performance. The last section will define some lessons learned from the demonstration project and suggest some guidelines for administrators who may be encouraged to employ part-time caseworkers in their own departments.

Implications For the Future

More than 40% of the students graduating from college today are women and most of these will choose to marry and have families of their own. There is need to make fuller and more imaginative use of this great pool of available part-time talent in the interests of a more effective public welfare system. Plans to separate financial aid from the delivery of social services may free social workers from much of the current paper work and from tasks which do not require complex problem identification and problem solving. If the ultimate aims of public service are to restore dignity to the poor and to make self-reliance possible for those who are employable, it will call for truly dedicated and intelligent workers whose life experiences have enriched their education by teaching them compassion and practical ways to deal with both the hopes and tragedies that are a part of the human condition and are common to rich and poor alike.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

Almost all of the state commissioners of public welfare who responded to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare survey in 1963 to determine interest in participation in the demonstration project were eager to have Catalyst help with recruiting qualified college graduates but drew the line at hiring part-time workers. They foresaw grave administrative problems and there was a widespread belief that civil service and merit system rules and procedures could not accommodate part-time professionals in public welfare.

The Massachusetts Department of Welfare required a preliminary feasibility study before accepting Catalyst's proposal. This study revealed, among other things, that there is nothing in civil service law to preclude the part-time employment of social workers. Existing procedures in the Massachusetts Department of Personnel were mainly focused on full-time employment but it was possible to use existing procedures to pro-rate remuneration and fringe benefits on a 50% basis for the half-timers.

Many other questions were raised that could only be answered by observation and careful research as the project evolved.

Would the jobs being offered appeal to qualified mature married women?

Presumably such women were living comfortable lives in the suburban areas of Boston. How many of them would actually seek and accept jobs that meant traveling to and serving families in the urban core?

As soon as public service announcements revealed that part-time

caseworker jobs were available, the Catalyst Project office in Boston was overwhelmed with calls. Far more women wanted to participate in the project than could be hired for the 50 available positions. 1500 telephone inquiries were received before the count was halted and throughout the project Catalyst continued to receive requests from women interested in such work. The experience proved that there is indeed a large untapped pool of qualified women eager to work in public welfare if they can do so on a part-time schedule.

Would these women, with demanding family responsibilities handle their share of work?

The Catalyst women had family responsibilities and many interests at home and it was some time since any of them had worked on regular schedules outside their homes. Would they be able to perform as effectively as the full-time workers?

In terms of case load and attention given to each case, the performance of the Catalyst workers was far beyond expectations. Department statistics showed that these half-timers who were assigned to A.F.D.C. cases (39 of the 41 Catalyst women studied had such assignments) were carrying an average of 42 family cases compared to an average of 78 cases carried by the full-timers with similar assignments. In the Grove Street office, where 14 Catalyst women had been placed, the half-timers were serving an average of 61 families each.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare measures worker activity in terms of "work units", defined as contacts between

workers and clients or others collaterally related to the case. These contacts are recorded on daily work sheets as occurring in the office, in the client's home or over the telephone.

On this measure of activity, the part-timers outperformed their full-time co-workers significantly. Each on an average had 89% (not the expected 50%) as many face-to-face contacts with clients, and averaged 20% more (rather than 50% less) telephone contacts with clients and others involved in their cases.

The exceptional productivity of the Catalyst women may be partially explained by their maturity and commitment. As one supervisor observed: "They spend less time than their full-time counterparts in expressing anger about the system ... and are therefore free to devote their energies to work with clients."

It was also noted that the part-time schedule was a positive advantage in casework. Their schedule made it possible to work for a concentrated period at a level of effort that is hard to maintain for eight hours; the shortened day is particularly advantageous in a job requiring great expenditures of emotional as well as intellectual energy.

What would be the attrition rate of the women recruited by Catalyst?

High turnover among full-time workers had long been a major problem in Boston. How long would these women remain on the job, particularly during the summer when they had only two weeks off and their husbands and children had long vacations?

The Catalyst women proved to be remarkably stable. Over a full

year period, including the summer months, the attrition rate of the part-timers was 14% - about one third that of full-timers in the department at the time. The life patterns of these women were established and they were less likely than the young new workers to leave for marriage or the birth of children. Moreover, their maturity equipped them to cope with greater equanimity with the inevitable frustrations that beset the public welfare social worker.

Would the part-timers be accepted by supervisors and full-time workers?

How would supervisors react to the need to supervise two people filling one full-time position? If many cases were covered only part of the time, wouldn't this place an extra burden on the full-time staff and create resentment?

The anticipated problems failed to materialize. Although there was some resistance and misunderstanding at first, especially in those regional offices where the staff had not been adequately briefed in advance, the Catalyst workers were soon accepted and their contributions deeply appreciated by supervisors and full-time co-workers. They were efficient in making appointments and informing clients of their schedules, generous in giving time and in covering for other workers. Many of the younger workers found a "mother image" in the Catalyst women and as one supervisor noted: "The combination of the older and younger workers together seems to hold down the level of anxieties."

The Catalyst Demonstration Project in Boston ended in September,

1970, two years after the first group of married college graduates began their half-time jobs. Most of the women are continuing to work half-time, but some have become full-time employees in the department, following a pattern that Catalyst has observed in other fields. As their children grow and their home responsibilities diminish, married women recruited for part-time work tend to become full-time workers.

Mature college women, with families of their own, reside in every part of the country and substantial numbers of them need only the opportunity to work on a flexible part-time schedule in order to contribute their skill and experience to public welfare. Catalyst hopes that the following detailed description of the Project will be helpful to administrators who may wish to use it as a model.

THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

The first phase of the Catalyst Demonstration Project in Boston was a six-month study to determine the feasibility of hiring mature, married college graduates as social workers on a part-time basis. The contract between Catalyst and the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare stipulated that this study would include:

1. Identification of social service tasks that could be conducted on a part-time basis.
2. An assessment of the appeal of these tasks to qualified, mature women.
3. The study and clarification of Civil Service law, rules, regulations and attitudes as well as personnel practices as they may pertain to such part-time employment.
4. Evaluation of the general practicality and usefulness of a part-time program.
5. An outline of proposed recruitment procedures.

1. Identification of tasks. Meetings with the Director of the Boston Regional Office and with its Personnel Director confirmed the acute turnover problem among first-line workers in Boston. It was decided that Catalyst workers would fill only existing vacancies and that 25 full-time positions would be divided into 50 half-time jobs. The women would perform the same tasks as other caseworkers but would carry proportionately smaller loads. The specific duties of a caseworker were defined as:

a. Determining eligibility for financial assistance.
b. Making a social study.
c. Identifying client's need for preventive or remedial service.
d. Drawing up a tentative treatment plan.
e. Offering appropriate services.

f. Making referrals to other agencies.
g. Keeping complete records.

2. Assessment of appeal to qualified women. Catalyst canvassed college placement offices and employment bureaus and found that, even though the number of part-time openings in many fields was on the increase, there were never enough such positions to match the number of women applying for part-time work. Many mothers of school-age children were being motivated to return to work by the rising cost of college tuition which their families must soon face.

Both the Massachusetts Division of Employment Security and the Social Work Careers Program indicated that more and more mature college-educated women were seeking information about social work and applying for jobs in the field. The YWCA mentioned that mature women seemed to be particularly interested in social work.

3. Civil Service Requirements and Personnel Procedures. The Director of Civil Service for Massachusetts acknowledged that the employment of part-time clerical workers is common in many government departments. The recommended procedure was for the Department of Public Welfare to notify Civil Service that it had a given number of openings for intermittent (part-time) social workers. On its next regular examination, Civil Service would include a place for the applicant to note whether she was applying for part-time work. One list of successful candidates would be drawn up, indicating those who desired to work part-time. Such workers would be able to apply for full-time jobs at a later date, should they so desire, without further examination. (All of the Catalyst recruits took the Civil

Service examinations during their first months of employment.)

Neither the State Bureau of Personnel nor the Director of Personnel for the State Welfare Department favored part-time employment. The Deputy Commissioner of Administration and Finance pointed out, however, that private business had been hiring part-time employees for many years and suggested that it was incumbent upon government to ascertain if these procedures were applicable in public welfare.

It was agreed that, by pro-rating salary and fringe benefits, the procedures set up for full-time could be adapted to part-time positions. The interpretation of step increases in salary increments penalized the part-time workers, however, as both time and money were prorated. According to this interpretation, a half-timer must wait two years to receive half the increase granted a full-time employee at the end of one year and must wait ten years to merit three weeks vacation at half pay while a full-timer would receive a three week vacation at full pay after five years. (The Assistant Commissioner of Administration in Massachusetts is now trying to have these policies changed.)

4. Evaluation of the practicality and usefulness of the program. Catalyst worked closely with the staff of the State Public Welfare Department and with the Boston Regional Office to develop a program that would be of optimum practicality and usefulness. A planning committee was established to determine working schedules and a training program for the new workers. It was decided tnat all the part-time positions would be derived from existing full-time

positions. The committee felt that a five-hour day was an efficient minimum and that most women would prefer a four-day to a five-day week. This schedule would constitute a half-time position. It was originally proposed that one unit be composed exclusively of part-timers and that such workers would work in pairs, back to back, each serving two full days and one half day a week. Although the idea of a 100% part-time unit was finally discarded, some of the part-timers did work on the two and a half day schedule.

Preliminary training was considered necessary and it was agreed to use as much as possible of the state's plan for induction of new workers. Catalyst would supply training specialists, and they would be available for continuing in-service training of all workers in any unit that included part-timers.

The usefulness of the program would be judged by the relative stability of the workers over a period of time and by their effectiveness in serving clients. Evaluation research, by a professional outsider, would be initiated soon after the program was under way and a report based on research findings submitted at the conclusion of the project.

5. Proposed recruitment procedures. Catalyst proposed to use publicity rather than paid advertising for recruiting. Press releases would go to all metropolitan and suburban newspapers and spots for use as public service announcements would be sent to radio stations in the area. Posters would be displayed in schools and shopping centers and other places where women congregate and women's organizations and civil rights groups would be informed of the project

and encouraged to recruit participants. A special effort would be made to recruit as many black women as possible, especially women from the areas to be served. Catalyst would interview applicants and refer only those women who had a strong commitment to work, a full understanding of the extensive responsibilities of a caseworker, and a positive and non-prejudicial attitude toward the welfare recipient.

The feasibility study was accepted by the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare in the spring of 1968 and the second phase began in May with an announcement of the program in the "Boston Public Welfare Advisory Newsletter."

RECRUITING PART-TIME WORKERS

The Publicity Campaign. In addition to the project director, employed to work part-time (three days a week), Catalyst employed a part-time (1 day a week) director of community relations to plan and direct the recruiting campaign. She drew on the experience of counseling services and college alumnae placement offices in planning the publicity campaign.

Press releases, radio spots, posters, and mailings to civic groups and women's organizations were prepared in advance and publicity was launched in May.* Many organizations do not hold meetings during the summer months and many mothers of school children make plans for the fall the preceding spring. For these reasons it was important to launch the campaign as soon as possible, even though hiring would not be done until September.

Press releases were sent to the four Boston daily newspapers and to 106 suburban papers. Radio spots, varying in length from 10 to 60 seconds were sent to fifteen radio stations. 500 posters were distributed throughout Boston and its suburban areas. The director of community relations established personal contacts with agency officials and community leaders to make sure the aims and details of the project were understood, and offered to send speakers to alumnae, civic and human rights groups in the area.

The project proved newsworthy and the response to it from all

---

*Examples of press releases and spot announcements are included in the appendix at the end of this report.

media was prompt and enthusiastic. The Boston Globe and the Christian Science Monitor carried feature stories about it. The radio stations were particularly generous with public service announcements. Throughout the spring and summer the spots were broadcast from four to eight times a day. In August, the five Boston television stations used short spots to promote the project.

Response from women. Although a telephone strike at the outset of the project was discouraging to immediate response, inquiries came in by mail and as soon as the phones finally began to ring, they did so incessantly. The phones were manned by part-timers five days a week for four months. A record of the number of phone inquiries was kept until 1500 had been received and it was decided to stop counting them.

Every effort was made to give those who phoned complete and accurate information and to make it clear that Catalyst was only screening applicants; the actual hiring would be done by the Department of Welfare. These phone conversations were used to discourage women who seemed to be hesitant about working in public welfare and those who did not sound as if they were ready to make a serious commitment to work. A number of women who had attended college but not received a degree had to be refused as a bachelor's degree was a prerequisite for a Civil Service caseworker.

The degree requirement was repeatedly questioned by the black community where a special recruiting effort was made. The number of middle-aged black women with college degrees is small and most of those with the required educational background were already employed.

Nearly 500 application forms were mailed out and about half of these were completed and returned. Three references were requested and all of these were checked by the Catalyst staff.

Interviews with applicants. Personal interviews were held with 173 of the applicants. The Catalyst office was located in a ghetto area of the inner city and this in itself caused some self-selection. Women unwilling to travel to the office for an interview were not likely to accept work in a similar neighborhood.

The personal interview had two aims. The first was to make sure that the candidate clearly understood the responsibilities of the position and the conditions for employment. Working hours, salary and vacation schedules were discussed and it was made clear that a mother would have to make arrangements for her children on a year-round basis and not just while school was in session. The second purpose was to assess the candidate's attitude toward public welfare and the role of the welfare worker.

77% of the women interviewed were judged to be qualified; fifty accepted the offer to participate in the Project and were referred to the Boston Regional Office for hiring.

Who were these women? The mature college graduate with a family of her own represents a potential labor force that is distinct in character from the professional workers and young college graduates toward whom public welfare recruiters normally direct their efforts. To verify this difference, a mail survey of the part-timers and a group of their full-time co-workers was conducted during the first year of the project.

Based on statistics from this survey, the "typical" woman recruited by Catalyst was a 45-year-old mother with three children in their early teens. Her family income was between $15,000 and $20,000 a year. She had previously been employed full-time but not in social work and it was nearly 14 years since her last job. She was attracted to her present job because it seemed like a good way to put her concern for social welfare into action. Her attitude toward welfare was liberal and, although she was sometimes upset by conflict between department obligations and professional responsibility, she liked her work and took pride in it.

The full-time workers differed from the Catalyst women most notably in age and marital status. Their average age was 29.4 years and only 32% were married. Nearly half had never had a full-time job before and most had been attracted to social work because of professional interest rather than ideological commitment. They were somewhat less liberal in their attitudes toward welfare and less likely to take as much pride in their work than were the Catalyst women.

The mature educated woman eager to combine family and work cannot be easily recruited in traditional ways because few of these women peruse the want ads or read notices of Civil Service examinations when they are publicized. However, administrators in any state or county wishing to employ such part-time caseworkers would find that much of the recruitment program used in the Boston Demonstration Project could be duplicated by contacting alumnae placement offices and using the phrase "part-time" in any notices of job openings.

ORIENTATION AND ASSIMILATION

The women recruited by Catalyst entered the department in three groups beginning in September 1968. They received the equivalent of a week and a half of orientation: one week, half-time, from the training supervisor of the Boston Regional Office and two weeks, half-time, from the Catalyst Training Staff.

The Catalyst Training Staff of five graduate professionals, working part-time, provided a total of 60 hours of training a week. The staff included a head social worker taking time off from her agency, a faculty member from the Smith College School of Social Work, an assistant professor from the Simmons College School of Social Work, a former family service worker from public welfare and a third-year doctoral candidate from the Florence Heller School of Social Welfare at Brandeis University.

Preliminary training sessions were designed to familiarize the women with the community and clientele they would be serving; with accepted procedures and the manual they would be using; with the contents of interviews and interviewing techniques and with available resources and ways to make referrals.

The part-time workers were placed in five of the six district offices of the Boston Region. They were given their own cases for which they were fully responsible. They were offered a choice of two working schedules, either five hours a day, four days a week or two full days plus one half day each week. Most of the women, who had children at home, chose the four day schedule, and most of the supervisors found this a satisfactory way to arrange the work

week. It meant that the part-timers worked on the busiest days (they had Wednesdays off) and during the busiest hours of the day (from 8:45 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.). One supervisor, whose unit served only adult cases, favored the two-and-a-half-day arrangement as the women worked in pairs, back-to-back, and one of them was always available.

Nearly all the Catalyst women were assigned to Aid to Families with Dependent Children cases. In the beginning an attempt was made to control the number of cases so that each would have no more than half the number recommended as a maximum A.F.D.C. load for full-time caseworkers. They could not be protected from increasing demands and soon they, like the full-timers, were carrying substantial overloads.

Acceptance of the part-time workers varied from one district office to another and pointed up the importance of informing the staff at all levels before such a program is initiated. Incorporation of the Catalyst workers into the existing staff was smoothest and happiest in the district office where a principal social work supervisor had served on the Catalyst Planning Committee. She had kept the supervisory staff informed about the project and the supervisors in turn had explained the program to the regular full-time workers in the course of unit meetings. The 12 Catalyst women assigned to this office received a warm welcome and generous help from their co-workers.

In contrast, the women who were placed in a district which had been subject to disturbing demonstrations in previous months and had not been scheduled originally to receive part-time employees

encountered great difficulty. Because of its serious shortage of staff and heavy case-load, the largest single group of part-timers were in the end assigned to this office. To the supervisors who were uninformed about the project, part-time workers meant double supervision and uncovered case-loads and as a result they did not welcome the Catalyst women. There was even less acceptance on the part of a few of the full-time workers, at least one of whom decided the Catalyst women were spies and a few more who believed that they were being paid full salaries for part-time work. After the women were placed, the Catalyst staff met with the supervisors to clarify the program but it took a long time for the resentment to disappear.

The Catalyst Training Staff provided in-service training for all workers in the units in which the part-time workers were placed. 120 caseworkers (the 50 Catalyst women plus 70 full-timers) were divided into 12 small groups and each group met in the district office for an hour and a half of training each week. The training program was conducted under the guidance of Staff Development personnel of the State Department of Public Welfare but no formal curriculum was drawn up. Each trainer was free to develop her own course and change it as she saw fit to meet the special needs of her groups.

In-service training is a controversial subject and the Boston Regional Office was not enthusiastic about the Catalyst training program. Many of the supervisors, and at first a number of the full-timers who were asked to participate in the program, felt that

the hour and a half devoted to on-going training was time that might be better spent in serving clients. However, all the women who participated in the program, full-timers and part-timers alike, subsequently found the weekly sessions of great value. The legal framework within which the worker must operate changes frequently as do administrative policies at the State and Federal level. The training sessions served a practical purpose in clarifying new laws or amendments and changes in policy as they occurred. The group sessions also provided psychological support for the workers and helped them to cope with their frustrations. By helping to reconcile theory with practice, the meetings relieved some of the anxieties that the workers had about conflicting values. Speakers from a variety of community agencies and visits to available resources facilitated referrals for many of the workers.

Each of the training specialists submitted a summary of the program and provided a subjective evaluation of its effectiveness. In the words of Mrs. Ann Gerber, a Catalyst trainer and an associate professor at the Simmons College School of Social Work:

> "It (the program) did not always provide the workers with ready answers to the difficult situations they face, but did significantly impart considerable knowledge and, what is equally important, gave them the support they needed in living with the reality of their heavy day-to-day loads. The group experience and collective thinking stirred ideas and gave comfort when the stresses on the job were particularly overwhelming."

The program seems to have filled the same needs for the full-time workers, even the most experienced, as it did for the part-timers. If adequate funds are available, such a program could be refined and made even more useful in other public welfare departments. There appears

to be no reason to assume, however, that part-time employees require any special training over and above that which benefits the regular full-timers.

PERFORMANCE OF PART-TIME WORKERS

Department statistics were used to compare the performance of the part-time workers recruited by Catalyst with the performance of full-time workers in the same district offices during the same period of time.

The caseloads of 41 of the 50 Catalyst women and of 364 regular full-timers were studied. All but two of the Catalyst part-timers carried A.F.D.C. cases, each of which involves the children as well as the adult, or adults, in the household responsible for them. Adult cases include assistance to the disabled, the aged and the blind, and each case involves a single individual, thus a worker can obviously carry many more adult or D.A.B. than A.F.D.C. cases. In the following table, where the number of cases assigned to Catalyst workers and full-time workers are compared, the figures for the mean number of A.F.D.C. cases are the most significant. On the basis of A.F.D.C. loads, the full-time workers served 78 families on the average and the half-timers served 42 - or slightly more than half (54%) of the average full-time load. The figures for those handling adult cases are somewhat less meaningful as only two part-time workers are involved.

Table 1. Workloads of Catalyst Women and Full Timers

	Catalyst		Full-timers	
	A.F.D.C.	Adult	A.F.D.C.	Adult
Number of cases	1,655	789	17,537	55,197
Number of workers	39	2	224	140
Mean number of cases	42.4	394.5	78.3	394.2

To obtain measurement of worker activity, a sample of 1000 worksheets was drawn from the records of the five district offices in which the Catalyst women were placed. 810 of these represented the full-time workdays of regular caseworkers and 190 the abbreviated workdays of the Catalyst women. An analysis of these sheets indicates that the part-timers were outperforming the full-timers significantly.

As the following table shows, the Catalyst women had more phone contacts and more face-to-face contacts with clients and with persons collaterally related to the case, such as relatives, teachers, physicians and court officers, than the full-timers had in an average day. Only in the area of home contacts with clients did the Catalyst workers average less than half (39%) the activity of the regular workers. If home and office contacts are combined to provide a measure of actual face-to-face contacts, the results show that the Catalyst worker had on the average 89%, rather than the expected 50%, as many face-to-face contacts with collateral persons as the full-timers had. The lower number of home contacts, when combined with the much greater use of office and phone contact, may indicate that the Catalyst women were using their limited time more efficiently.

The content of the contacts may be as important as the number of contacts made. For this reason, the questionnaire sent to part-time and full-time workers included questions about the frequency with which the workers advised their clients about personal-emotional problems, medical and dental care, job training or their children's education. Part-timers and full-timers gave equal

Table 8: Total and Mean Number of Client and Collateral Contacts by Place of Contact, of Catalyst Women and Full-Timers

	Telephone		Office		Home	
	Total	Mean	Total	Mean	Total	Mean
A. Client Contacts						
Catalyst Women (Half-Timers)	350	1.84	778	4.09	75	.39
Full-Timers	1,207	1.49	3,202	3.95	880	1.09
B. Collateral Contacts						
Catalyst Women (Half-Timers)	133	.70	170	.89	12	.06
Full-Timers	502	.62	98	.12	66	.08

attention to emotional problems, health and job training, but the Catalyst women, almost all of whom were mothers of school age children, talked more frequently to the clients about their children's education.

It was relatively easy to measure how much work the part-timers did. However, limitations of time and resources made it impossible to quantify how well they did it. In order to obtain some evaluation of the quality of the Catalyst workers' performance, more than two dozen meetings were held with unit and principal supervisors and with administrative personnel. As indicated earlier, many of the first-line supervisors were very much opposed to having part-time

workers thrust upon them. It is significant that six to twelve months later they were almost unanimous in praising the work of the Catalyst women assigned to their units and district offices.

The supervisory personnel commented favorably on the fact that the Catalyst women were punctual, dependable and cooperative. The reduction in turnover was appreciated and it was generally felt that the stability of the Catalyst women was helping to stabilize the staff. Many supervisors noted that these "motherly" women combined a sensitivity and efficiency that was a good influence on the younger workers. It was agreed that clients were able to relate better to these older women who had children of their own and that the family experience of the Catalyst women was a major asset in providing guidance for A.F.D.C. families.

LESSONS AND GUIDELINES

The Boston Demonstration Project continued for two years until September, 1970. At that time, seven of the Catalyst part-time workers had become full-time employees of the Massachusetts Department of Welfare and the remaining Catalyst recruits continued as part-time employees.

The success of the project came to the attention of welfare administrators in nearby states when the Director of the Boston Regional Office arranged for a presentation of the program at the Northeast Regional Conference of the American Public Welfare Association in September, 1969. Papers were presented by the Catalyst Director, the Principal Social Work Supervisor in the Roxbury Crossing district office and one of the participating part-timers. As a result, the Connecticut Department of Public Welfare, which had considered the Catalyst proposal several years previously, has begun to offer part-time casework positions and the Hartford College of Women is assisting them with recruitment.

Public welfare administrators in other states may wish to take advantage of some of the lessons learned from the Boston experiment.

A. New resource. The tremendous response to the announcement that Massachusetts would hire public welfare caseworkers on a part-time basis indicates that great numbers of college graduates are eager to use their education productively and to be of service to society. This resource is largely untapped because such women are seldom able to either work full-time or to secure part-time employment while their children are still young and at home. They do not

respond to the usual recruiting techniques for full-time positions or civil service jobs. Conversely, men and women who are interested in full-time jobs in public welfare are not interested in part-time offerings. That there is a real difference between the two groups was demonstrated at the end of the first year of the Boston Demonstration project. Because several of the Catalyst women had changed to full-time positions and a few others had resigned, there were eleven part-time vacancies. Civil Service rules required that these positions must first be offered to those who had taken and passed examinations for full-time casework positions and whose names were on the latest Civil Service list. Not one of these candidates was interested in part-time work so Catalyst immediately filled the vacancies by informing married college women of the opportunities.

B. Recruitment. Newspaper publicity and public service announcements on the air were the most effective means of reaching Catalyst women. It is important to make clear that the positions are part-time and that they provide an opportunity to combine professional and family responsibilities. Many women have the impression that social work requires a graduate degree so publicity should specify that a bachelor's degree in any field of study is sufficient. Recruitment publicity of this sort results in a high degree of self-selection, attracting mature women who are committed ideologically to the welfare of society. This ideological motivation combined with a positive decision to return to work makes the "Catalyst woman" unusually dedicated and responsible.

C. Orientation of existing staff. A new program or a new policy, particularly when it is a new personnel policy, arouses fear and

resentment unless it is thoroughly explained before it is put into operation. It is important to inform line supervisors and full-time workers in advance when part-time workers are to be introduced for the first time into a welfare office. It is even more helpful if supervisors are given an opportunity to offer suggestions for incorporating these new workers into the system.

D. Personnel Policies. If the hiring of part-time workers is to become a matter of policy, one person in the personnel office might be assigned to handle the special procedures and initial computations required to pro-rate compensation and fringe benefits as well as arrangements for sick leave and vacations.

The Boston experience suggests that promotional policies as they apply to part-time workers may need careful rethinking. The policy, as it was interpreted in Massachusetts, penalized the part-timers in terms of salary increment insofar as they had to wait twice as long to receive half the benefits awarded to full-timers.

Nearly half the Catalyst women joined the union during their first year of employment. The Boston local has since developed provisions for part-time workers in its labor contract.

E. Training. The Catalyst women received essentially the same orientation as that given all new workers. The assumption that the part-time workers, most of whom had not worked for many years and none of whom had ever worked in public welfare, would need special training over and above that provided for new full-time workers proved false. Though both the Catalyst women and the full-timers who participated in the in-service training program found it helpful in a number of ways, it would be possible to provide these benefits without

special staff. Line supervisors might be carefully selected according to their ability to work with new employees and time provided to allow them to assume more of the training function.

F. Assignments. There is no need to create special positions for part-time workers. The casework method of serving public welfare clients lends itself naturally to part-time work, as it is primarily a matter of assigning fewer cases to the part-timer than the full-timer. For the Boston demonstration project, the Catalyst women worked exactly half the schedule of a full-timer but it would be equally feasible to offer part-time jobs for two-thirds or three-quarters of a week.

A major resistance to the employment of part-time caseworkers is based on the fear that their cases will be uncovered part of the time and that this will result in a heavy burden on other workers and supervisors required to cover for them. In actual practice, this was not a serious problem. The Catalyst women were careful to make appointments and keep clients informed of their working hours. Clients responded and respected their schedules. The part-timers were generous in covering for other workers and took their turn, along with the full-timers, at reception desk duty.

G. Working schedules. As has been previously noted, most of the women in the project preferred the four day, five hour schedule though in one district the women worked in pairs, two and a half days each in a back-to-back arrangement. The ultimate responsibility for specific part-time work schedules should, however, belong to the head supervisor in each office who would also be responsible for assigning cases to part-time workers.

The special effectiveness of the Catalyst women in working with A.F.D.C. families is worth noting. If, in the near future, income maintenance is to be separated from the delivery of social services and if social services to A.F.D.C. families become a part of Child Welfare, there will be a greater need than ever for social workers of the caliber of the Catalyst women. Their personal experience in rearing their children and dealing with teen-age problems and their knowledge of home management, budgeting and marketing are assets of great potential value in child welfare work.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Commissioners and administrators in public welfare who set personnel policy hold the key to solution of its many problems. The increasing demand to make the system more responsive to the needs of a free society, which enjoys an unusually high standard of living, is not likely to diminish. Surely a more workable framework is essential but the people who work within that framework will determine how well the system functions. A great opportunity to improve the quality and effectiveness of welfare services exists in the pool of able, experienced and well educated women who are eager to work part-time. Every community has a substantial reservoir of such women and every public welfare department could benefit from their services.

The Boston Project has demonstrated that there is a positive value in a part-time schedule for workers in public welfare. The shorter day was an advantage in a job that tires the brain and drains the emotions. The part-time workers were able to product at a level

hard to sustain for a full eight hours.

The accepted employment pattern requiring five eight-hour days of work is being questioned in many fields and new patterns for longer, as well as shorter, working days are beginning to emerge. The "eight hour shift" made sense in steel mills and factories where human work was manual and working hours were determined by the need to keep costly machines in constant operation. When profit and benefits to society depend more on the quality of a worker's performance than on the hours he spends, it is fair to question traditional definitions of full-time, part-time and over-time. Only when employers determine their need by the work to be done rather than by the hours to be spent in doing it will this situation be changed.

The Catalyst staff is prepared to work closely with administrators in public welfare who would like to explore employing mature college graduates on a part-time basis. Catalyst welcomes the opportunity to assist them in analyzing their needs and recruiting part-time caseworkers. Catalyst is also happy to work with women's organizations or civic groups that may be interested in fostering this practice in their communities.

Please address inquiries to:

Catalyst
6 East 82nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10028

APPENDIX A

MEMBERS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS AND BOSTON DEPARTMENTS OF PUBLIC WELFARE, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE, AND THE UNITED STATES CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION WHO COOPERATED WITH CATALYST DURING THE PROJECT.

Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare

Robert F. Ott, Commissioner
Robert P. Curran, Deputy Commissioner
John R. McGaughey, Deputy Commissioner
James Carson, Asst. Commissioner, Administration
Mable Campbell, Director of Civil Service
Mary A. Darragh, Supervisor of Training Office of Asst. Commissioner, Administration
Bernice Rosenbaum, In Service Training Supervisor
Elaine Kohn, Recruitment Specialist, Boston Regional Office

Boston Regional Office, Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare

Daniel Cronin, Director
Doris Burke, Deputy Director of Social Services
Hiram Le Mark (Dr.), Deputy Commissioner of Administration and Finance

Department of Health, Education and Welfare

Prudence Irving, Training and Manpower Development Specialist, Region I

United States Civil Service Commission

Joe Robertson, Acting Director of Bureau of Intergovernmental Personnel Programs

APPENDIX B

EXCERPTS FROM PAPERS PRESENTED AT THE NORTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WELFARE ASSOCIATION, SEPTEMBER 9, 1969.

ALICE MAC DONALD - Part-Time Social Worker, Boston Regional Office, Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare

HELEN O'CONNELL - Principal Social Work Supervisor, Roxbury Crossing Office, Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare

RUTH MALENKA - Project Director, Catalyst in Social Work

PAPER PRESENTED AT NORTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WELFARE ASSOCIATION
SEPTEMBER 9, 1969
BY MRS. ALICE MAC DONALD
PART-TIME SOCIAL WORKER, BOSTON REGIONAL OFFICE
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

I approach the problem of describing my part in the Catalyst Program with a good deal of uncertainty. The experiences of this past year have been in many ways so rewarding that I could easily slip into a testimonial - "How I Found the Catalyst Program and Was Saved." I do feel that my life has entered a vital new stage. I have nothing but enthusiastic things to say about going back to work. Both my adolescent son and I are more comfortable when I am too busy to worry about whether or not he is wearing his rubbers. (When I told him that I was coming to this conference, I could see that he was actually proud of me.) However, my eleven-year old Jamie still thrives on maternal snuggling. Because of this, I would find it impossible to work full time.

When I applied in July, 1968, I was full of secret anxieties, which I tried not to communicate to Mrs. Malenka: How would I arrange for the one afternoon a week when Newton elementary schools let out at noon; what would happen if Jamie got hurt and I was half an hour away. Soon I discovered that many of the other Catalyst women had similar fears. We all held our breaths for awhile, hardly daring to believe that we were actually going to work every day; that meals were on the table in time; that there was no more dust than usual on the piano; that none of our children developed Bubonic Plague. Somehow or other, we all managed to trim the Christmas tree or light the Hannukah candles or whatever.

More significant, I was worried about my future role in public welfare. Would I be able to function in a system which I felt had often violated the dignity of the poor? The interview, which was designed to probe for attitudes, was reassuring. It was apparent that the interviewer had structured her questions around the issues which most concerned me. The interview served to sensitively define the Catalyst program as well as the person being interviewed. Catalyst passed my attitude test.

I started with the first group on September 30th. The fall was a blur of confusion - a bewildering melange of forms to master, clients to identify, problems to solve. I was on a constant high of enthusiasm for my new career. I talked constantly at home about my job. My husband listened with great interest. My children soon got bored.

For the first few months, I thought of myself as a "Catalyst" - a member of a special group who had come to "save" the welfare system from itself. By Christmas, however, fatigue had taken some of the tilt out of my lance, and I was a typically weary "welfare worker" - frustrated, sometimes depressed, sometimes angry, always behind, buried alive under papers.

It is then, I think, the program began to really work. It is easy to be a pioneer - or a Catalyst - the sheer exhilaration of adventure and newness carries you forward. But it is not easy to be a "welfare worker," as you all know - to keep slogging along through the morass of human hopelessness and bureaucratic inefficiency. It was when I began to want to quit on bad days that I truly became a welfare worker.

Ironically, however, it is the built-in strengths of a program like Catalyst that keep me going to work every day except Wednesday, our day off. It is the fact that I have a Wednesday off that helps me go back on Thursday with renewed enthusiasm; it is the fact that on Thursday we attend a training session, giving me some perspective on my problems. And, to be blunt, it is the fact that part-time jobs are impossible to get, and we are women who have discovered that we want to work.

This is what I think this program will prove - that women want to work. But they want to be good wives and good mothers as well. The Catalyst Program was consciously designed to give us a chance to exercise all of our options as women. I find that being a mother and being a social worker are roles that reinforce each other.

When I talk with a client about her problems, I often hear reverberations of my own experiences. When Mrs. N. calls me and sounds angry because her baby's nose is running again and she has been up all night taking care of her, I can remember many sleepless nights with my own allergic children. And it is easy for me to hear the worry for the baby being expressed through her anger, and recognize the familiar feeling that she herself is so tired she wishes someone would take care of her.

I can give her practical advice - suggest that she take the baby's temperature; call the Visiting Nurse to make a home visit. But, most important, I can listen to what she really means beneath what she is saying - and therefore know best how to respond. I will know that the baby will probably recover from his running nose with little complication, but that my client may have a much harder time shaking her fatigue, her sense of hopelessness and inadequacy. And I will express concern for her as well as for the baby. More significant than the practical knowledge which some of us have gathered through years of managing our own households is the knowledge of just how difficult it is to be a mother. And there is the sober realization that most of our mothers have no one but themselves to help them rear their children.

Many of the Catalyst women have been eager to help their clients find part-time jobs or to enroll in training programs. This is probably because we are so thrilled with our own jobs. I suppose that we can't help but communicate our own increased interest in life, our growing self-esteem. I find that my clients take a lively interest in the fact that I am working at a part-time job while my children are still at home. For one client in particular, I know we served as models. She talked with me about how she liked to help people with their problems. Soon she was articulating a specific desire to be a social

worker. Now she is working as a case aide for the Boston Housing Authority in a New Careers training program.

It is natural for me to help my clients explore their own self doubts and fears about working, because these are feelings I've so recently experienced. I find that nearly all of my clients would like to work, at least part-time. Of course, the lack of proper day-care facilities makes it almost impossible for many of them to be able to do so. Also lacking are many more and much better training programs, and, of course, beyond that, appropriate jobs with open-ended futures attached.

Many of us have found ourselves with the frustrating job of educating our friends - our neighbors - our mailmen - our beauticians. Wherever we go, we find ourselves answering questions about WELFARE. Almost all of us live in suburban communities, a lifetime away from the Roxbury public housing project where I work, though it is only a twenty-minute trolley ride. One of my fellow Catalysts, who is married to a successful Newton businessman, is frequently greeted at cocktail parties by sallies like - "I need a new refrigerator - What can you do for me?" The U.S. mails were held up for an hour and a half the other day while Edna sat on the front steps discussing her job with the postman. It turned out that he had grown up in a Charlestown slum. He had always worked hard. His father had always worked hard. "How can anyone stay on welfare?" he asked. Edna found herself talking with him about the social questions of the day. And he listened because she spoke with the conviction growing out of personal experience. Liberalism is a rather unconvincing abstraction to people who are themselves struggling to buy bread and shoes. When you are a mother talking about another mother needing school clothing for her children, people usually listen. Often they begin to sympathize and to understand a little better.

The human condition is pretty uncomfortable for the luckiest of us. It is this painful knowledge which we bring to our new jobs. I think it helps us understand in a way no textbook could. I sometimes hear other Catalysts lamenting that they don't know more about social work. I maintain that their life experience has taught them as much as many a graduate program. I do feel, though, that the training component of our program is valuable.

Though we were all anxious to meet a real live client, I think this was a valuable use of our time. Some of us felt that we might have been taught more of the technicalities of the job - filling out forms, figuring budgets, filling out forms, studying the manual and filling out forms. Instead we talked about poverty, conflicts of dependency, the history of welfare, methods of interviewing. But most important, probably, we talked about ourselves: our fear of going into the ghetto, our doubts as to how we would be received by the black clients with whom we would be working (we were all highly skeptical of the Lady Bountiful image we might project), our embarrassment that there were so few among us who were black or who had lived in poverty. I think that this kind of ventilation made it possible for us to function with a good deal more sensitivity when we finally made our first visits.

We weren't shielded for long. As soon as we were assigned to our desks, we were given half a caseload and put on our own. We expected to be greeted with quiet reservations by our fellow workers. Instead we were welcomed warmly.

I hear that some of us were not so well received in some of the other buildings. I am not quite clear as to why this should have been. I do know that the way was well prepared for our arrival at Roxbury Crossing, and this was certainly helpful. I would strongly suggest, however, that a general announcement with specific details of employment terms be made to all full-time workers in the event that this program be initiated somewhere else. Months went by before a few of us discovered that some other workers thought we were paid more than they were or that we had special privileges. It is amazing that these misconceptions didn't generate more hostility.

In reviewing what I've been saying, I realize that I've painted a pretty rosy picture. It would be dishonest not to tell you that we have all suffered the usual frustrations of working for public welfare. Many of us hate the paper work. Some are well organized and can keep it from intruding too much on our social work function. Others, like me, struggle constantly to keep the clerical duties under control. We all agree, however, that our job as welfare workers is to make sure that our clients receive whatever they are entitled to. We are a pretty conscientious bunch when it comes to making out the cost of living increases, issuing school clothing grants, paying home visits to determine furniture needs. A few of us mesh with the system fairly neatly. Others, who are graceful, know how to be their clients' advocate without raising their voice. Some are more militant than others. But we all agree upon two things: First, we like our clients. This is the raison d'etre for being at Roxbury Crossing, or Hancock St., or Grove Hall. Second, we like working - and we like working part time.

PAPER PRESENTED AT NORTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WELFARE ASSOCIATION
BALTIMORE MARYLAND - SEPTEMBER 9, 1969
BY MISS HELEN O'CONNELL, PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISOR
ROXBURY CROSSING WELFARE SERVICE OFFICE
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

District 3, or the Roxbury Crossing Unit as it is also known, is located on a very busy main street about five miles from downtown Boston. The staff at Roxbury Crossing consists of a Head Social Work Supervisor, three Principal Social Work Supervisors, twelve Social Work Supervisors, seventy-five social workers, nine Catalysts and twenty-nine ancillary staff. The entire case load as of July 30, 1969, was 12,427 of which 3,659 were Aid To Families with Dependent Children. It has within its area five large Public Housing Projects with about 1,400 Aid to Families with Dependent Children living in them.

It was to this office twelve Catalysts came in September 1968. I had served on a Catalyst Planning Committee and had tried to keep our Supervisory Staff alerted about the program, what these women were to do, and how we could implement the program at Roxbury Crossing.

On the first day of the Catalyst arrival at Roxbury Crossing, I was asked to discuss briefly Public Welfare and the various forms used in the mechanics of the job. Their assignments were to be made in unassigned areas. The plan of placing was discussed with me by the Head Social Work Supervisor. I had observed how they came to the District Office daily and how they had paired off. Their addresses were also checked as to who lived near whom. The placements were made to the delight of all.

Resistance first came from the Staff when it was announced that there was a built-in Training Program with weekly meetings under the direction of a Catalyst Supervisor. It involved units where Catalysts were placed. Our Supervisors felt that with the pressure of work, with their continuous training of new Social Workers and their knowledge of Public Welfare and social work concepts that they did not need this extra training. It was decided that Supervisors could be excused, but Social Workers were to attend. Again resistance came from workers - a question of giving an hour and a half weekly with the pressures of the job. After several meetings, their attitudes changed, and they were enjoying a learning experience.

The following are my observations of the Program from an Administrative level:

1. I have been ever so impressed with the punctuality and dependability in attendance. They arrive before time and many days are at their desks long after 2:00 P.M. which is time for departure. A recent example is one Catalyst who remained after

3:15 P.M. on a Friday afternoon following through on an eviction problem of a large family.

2. These mature women brought with them many of their own family experiences which were assets in A.F.D.C. family guidance. Their knowledge of home economics, child rearing, teen-age problems, budgeting, and marketing, has been shared with their clients.

3. The young Social Workers come to the Agency from all over the country. In most instances, this is their first job, although not their first time away from home. These workers did find a "mother image" in the Catalyst. For example, one young worker probably never could have survived the emotional trauma resulting from an office demonstration without the understanding patience and support from one of the Catalysts.

4. Some clients have requested that they do not want such young workers as Social Workers but wanted older people and have been happy with Catalysts.

5. The Catalysts have accepted and showed a wholesome attitude toward Public Welfare and their willingness to be part of a constructive change in the Public Welfare system. They were liberal in meeting needs but realistic in assessing them. They showed quick awareness of clients' problems. Service is given promptly.

6. The Catalysts have helped stabilize staff which has undergone a great deal of turnover. With the Catalysts, there has been a continuity. Clients have expressed pleasure that they have had the same worker for about a year.

7. Additional responsibility has been accepted very willingly by these Catalysts. Examples of this are that now each has a turn as duty worker. In absence of another social worker, the Catalysts have accepted telephone calls and have seen other workers' clients. The staff readily accepted the Catalyst schedules (not reporting on Wednesday) and, also, their limited work day. Clients before long had adjusted to this also.

In conclusion - in a capsule form - I would state that the Catalysts are mature, dependable, stable women who have helped bridge the generation gap. They all took the Civil Service Examination. I hope that they will in the future become permanent members of our staff.

PAPER PRESENTED AT NORTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WELFARE ASSOCIATION
SEPTEMBER 9, 1969
BY MRS. RUTH S. MALENKA
PROJECT DIRECTOR, CATALYST IN SOCIAL WORK

From the beginning, our aim was to attract to Public Welfare mature, married women who were commited to the goals of public assistance. We quickly established the fact that there was a large untapped resource of married women with college degrees interested in working part time in the field of social work. The facts were furnished by the colleges, the employment offices, and responses to the questionnaires that were sent out. The focus today on poverty, urban decay and the racial crisis has created a widespread interest in working with poverty groups. We also found that it was difficult to recruit black married women with college degrees, the number of middle-aged black women with college degrees is small, and those who did have the educational background were generally already employed.

Once we realized that the manpower was available, we began to look into the more technical aspects. Civil Service informed us that there was no limitation in the law that precluded the hiring of social workers on a part-time basis in Public Welfare. But the other policies were not the most attractive for recruitment. The interpretation of step increases meant that half-time workers receive their first increment only after two years of employment, and then receive only one-half of what a full-time worker receives at the end of one year. Our contract called for the hiring of fifty women to fill twenty-five existing permanent slots. In defining the tasks of workers employed half-time, we decided that they would be identical with those employed full time except for a smaller number of cases for which they would be completely responsible. In an effort to observe different patterns of work, we suggested two ways of arranging the work week: Five hours a day, four days a week, or two full days and one-half day. As we expected, most of the women who have children at home chose the four-day week. Only those with grown families chose the two and one-half day pattern. The above work proposals of the Program were discussed at several meetings with a committee composed of all levels of staff of Boston Public Welfare. The training component of the program was planned during this time and was to include weekly training sessions for all workers in units where Catalyst women would be placed.

Once our Proposal was accepted by the Department, we entered the second phase of the Project by announcing the Program in the "Boston Public Welfare Advisory Newsletter," which is published weekly. We gave the first press release to the black press. After this we sent press releases to all suburban newspapers and the Boston daily papers. Spot announcements were sent to radio stations and were used as public service announcements four to eight times a day. It is interesting to note that radio stations were interested and more than willing to make the announcements. In August public affairs announcements were used on t.v. stations. Posters were distributed throughout the Greater

Boston area in libraries, bookstores, shopping centers, schools and social agencies. Individual mailings were sent to appropriate organizations.

As soon as the announcement was made in Boston, our phone never stopped ringing. It is still ringing a year later although we stopped recruiting in the fall of 1968. Our policy was to give each and every caller complete and accurate information about the project. We made a special effort to make the caller understand that Catalyst was only screening applicants, but the actual hiring of the applicant was to be done by the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare. We sometimes used the phone interviews to discourage people from applying who obviously were not ready yet to take on a full commitment to work or were hesitant about working in public welfare. By placing our office in a well-known black community center with a Roxbury address, we could eliminate those who would not choose to come to a community which is predominantly black.

From interviews, we obtained the fifty women we referred to public welfare. The woman entered the department in three groups. The groups received three weeks' preliminary training, one week from the training supervisor of the Boston Department of Public Welfare and two weeks from the Catalyst Training Staff. The third group received one week's training from each. We utilized as much as we could of the State's plan of induction and in-service training for new workers. Weekly in-service training involves fifty half-time workers and seventy full-time workers for one and one-half hours per week.

Initially, the teaching was done through the case method, and the workers were asked to bring material to the sessions. Included also were discussions on the various issues related to public welfare, including proposed changes, such as negative income tax and family allowance programs. Whenever possible, our training specialists responded to the requests of the groups or individuals within the group. Thus, in one group several sessions were devoted to unmarried mothers because of the nature of the case loads.

The introduction of the women into the system was quite smooth. However, there was some resentment towards the half-time workers from the young workers in the department. They incorrectly assumed that the half-time workers were being employed instead of a full-time worker, and therefore, their own caseloads would be increased. The women felt that they were really accepted by the young workers when one of the young male workers said to a Catalyst woman, "Gee, why can't you convince my mother to become a Catalyst worker?"

In viewing the project from my vantage point, I see a tremendous benefit to the system in having these half-time employees. The system is getting a commited, dedicated woman who often gives unselfishly of her time. Many women work longer hours and take work home. They find that they can do their telephoning uninterrupted in the afternoon from their own homes. The Department is getting the productive hours of a worker when they get the first five hours of a day even if no extra

time is given. Their response to the work is positive, and they feel the importance of it, even though they often express frustrations about procedures and paper work. On the whole, they identify with the department and its goals.

As a group, they offer stability to the department since there is less turnover. Because of their maturity and experience, they also relate very well to the young workers.

Only by carefully observing these fifty women can one see patterns of work evolving which relate to their phase of life. For instance, one of the Catalyst women noticed that the mothers in her area all sent their children to the same school which had no PTA. In talking to the women, she realized that there were some common complaints about the school. She is now spending her time helping these mothers organize a PTA for their school. The women, as do all workers, carry a heavy case load, but they all manage to select certain cases in which they can do some intensive work. One woman mentioned to me the satisfaction she derived from helping a young black high school student obtain a scholarship to Harvard. She said that most of her work was done with the mother in helping her understand that her son had the ability to survive at this University. The family is still in her caseload, and she is well aware that both mother and son are going to need continued support. The social isolation of mothers on AFDC has been a concern to many of the Catalyst women. They have compassion for these mothers who are bringing up children alone. One worker has been able to have her clients work out an exchange baby sitting arrangement. Another worker realized that she had many obese mothers in her caseload and set up a diet group. Because they themselves have brought up children and have been given guidance about bringing up children, they have some understanding that you just can't tell someone to do something and expect that it will be done.

Many women have indicated to me that they are thinking of becoming full-time workers. They would never have thought of becoming public welfare workers without this opportunity of working half-time.

We're genuinely impressed, as you can tell, with the quality of work that is being done. Our experience so far indicates that any department that opens up half-time positions, and adequately publicizes this fact, will be able to hire from this untapped resource of mature, married women with college degrees.

APPENDIX C

RELEASES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

#1 - Release Sent to Suburban Newspapers in Boston Area

FROM: CATALYST IN SOCIAL WORK
14 Crawford Street
Roxbury, Massachusetts 02121
442-8688

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Married women with a college degree in any field, interested in a part-time paid position in social work, are now being recruited for a special two-year demonstration project in the Boston Public Welfare Department.

The program, which begins this fall, will be under the joint auspices of the Massachusetts Public Welfare Department and Catalyst in Social Work, a non-profit service organization.

A degree in social work will not be necessary for this project; orientation and training will be provided by an experienced professional staff.

Selected college graduates will have an opportunity to help the core city meet its needs by using their knowledge of community problems, family budgets and child care to guide persons requiring public assistance.

Each woman will be employed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare and will work in Boston for 20 hours a week. She will be eligible for medical and insurance benefits and vacation pay.

The project will be directed by Mrs. Bertram J. Malenka of Belmont. A graduate of Boston University School of Social Work, she was head social worker for the Greater Boston Association for Retarded Children.

Mrs. William B. McClain of Boston will be the community relations director. She has taught in the public school systems of both Alabama and Massachusetts and has worked in the community with her husband, Reverend McClain.

For further information and interview, contact Mrs. Malenka, Catalyst in Social Work, 14 Crawford Street, Roxbury, Mass. 442-8688.

#2 - Short Release for Use in Newsletters of College Alumnae Clubs and Women's Organizations

Mature married women with a college degree are being recruited to work 20 hours a week in Boston Public Welfare.

Women who seek to alleviate the problems facing the city and the suburb can make a significant contribution in the field of social work.

This demonstration project is under the joint auspices of the Mass. Department of Public Welfare and Catalyst In Social Work.

For information contact Catalyst - 442-8688.

#3 - Letter Announcing Program Sent to Groups

This letter is to announce the start of a part-time social work program called Catalyst in Social Work. Because we believe our program may be of great interest to many of your members, we are outlining some of its main points.

The Massachusetts Public Welfare Department will be hiring mature married college graduates as half-time paid social workers in Boston for a two-year demonstration project. These women do not require a degree in Social Work, but will obtain orientation and training under professional social workers.

We hope to recruit fifty women, who will work in Boston twenty hours a week, beginning in September and October of 1968.

The project provides an opportunity for concerned women to help our core city meet its demands. These women, who want to work and use their knowledge of community problems, family budgets and child care, can do much to alleviate the shortage of workers in public welfare and help those in need of public assistance.

Would it be possible for one of our staff to attend the next meeting of your organization and give a brief description of the project?

Perhaps you could inform your members that anyone interested in learning more about the program should call our office, 442-8688.

Thank you for your cooperation in publicizing this new program.

Cordially,

Ruth S. Malenka (Mrs. B.J.)
Project Director

#4 - Covering Letter to Radio Stations

Married women with a college degree in any field are now being recruited for a special two year demonstration project in the Boston Public Welfare Department.

The program, which begins this fall, will be under the joint auspices of the Massachusetts Public Welfare Department and Catalyst in Social Work, a non-profit service organization.

Selected college graduates will have an opportunity to help the core city meet its needs by using their knowledge of community problems, family budgets and child care to guide persons requiring public assistance.

I am enclosing a series of public service announcements which I hope you will be able to use during the summer months to help us publicize the project.

With sincere appreciation for your interest and support.

Cordially,

Pamela McClain
Director, Community Relations

#5 - Radio Public Service Announcements

For Use Through October, 1968

Time: 10 Seconds

Words: 33

Anncr: Combine family responsibilities with a part-time paid position in social work. Married college graduates are now being recruited for a special program in Boston Public Welfare. Social work degree not required. Call 442-8688.

Time: 20 Seconds

Words: 80

Anncr: Combine family responsibilities with a part-time paid position in social work. Married college graduates are now being recruited for a special two-year program in Boston Public Welfare. A social work degree will not be necessary; professional training will be provided. The project will be

under the joint auspices of the Mass. Department of Public Welfare and Catalyst In Social Work, a non-profit service organization. Contact Mrs. Ruth Malenka, Catalyst In Social Work, 14 Crawford Street, Roxbury, Telephone 442-8688.

Time: 30 seconds

Words: 99

Anncr: Combine family responsibilities with a part-time position in social work. Married college graduates are now being recruited for a two-year demonstration project in the Boston Public Welfare Department. The program, which begins this Fall, will be under the joint auspices of the Mass. Public Welfare Department and Catalyst In Social Work, a non-profit service organization. A degree in social work will not be necessary for this project; professional training will be provided. For further information and interview, contact Mrs. Ruth Malenka, Catalyst in Social Work, 14 Crawford Street, Roxbury. Telephone 442-8688.....That's 442-8688.

Time: 60 Seconds

Words: 148

Anncr: Combine family responsibilities with a part-time paid position in social work. Married college graduates are now being recruited for a special two-year demonstration project in the Boston Public Welfare Department. The program, which begins this Fall, will be under the joint auspices of the Mass. Public Welfare Department and Catalyst In Social Work, a non-profit service organization. A degree in social work will not be necessary for this project; professional training will be provided. Selected college graduates will have an opportunity to help meet the needs of our core city by using their knowledge of community problems, family budgets and child care to guide persons requiring public assistance. For further information and interview, write Mrs. Ruth Malenka, Project Director, Catalyst in Social Work, 14 Crawford Street, Roxbury, or call 442-8688. That's 442-8688.

#6 - Letter To All Suburban NAACP Chapters

This letter is to announce the start of a part-time social work program called Catalyst in Social Work. Because we believe our program may be of great interest to many of your members, we are outlining some of its main points.

The Massachusetts Public Welfare Department will be hiring mature married college graduates as half-time paid social workers in Boston for a two-year demonstration project. These women do not require a degree in Social Work, but will obtain orientation and training under professional social workers.

We hope to recruit fifty women, who will work in Boston twenty hours a week, beginning in September and October of 1968.

The project provides an opportunity for concerned women to help our core city meet its demands. These women, who want to work and use their knowledge of community problems, family budgets and child care, can do much to alleviate the shortage of workers in public welfare and help those in need of public assistance.

Would it be possible for one of our staff to attend the next meeting of your organization and give a brief description of the project?

Perhaps you could inform your members that anyone interested in learning more about the program should call our office, 442-8688.

Thank you for your cooperation in publicizing this new program.

Cordially,

Ruth S. Malenka (Mrs. B.J.)
Project Director

#7 - Letter to Presidents of Local College Alumnae Clubs

Dear Alumnae President,

This letter announces the start of a challenging new part-time career program in Boston under the aegis of "Catalyst in Social Work". We believe it will be of real interest to many of your members and are pleased to have this chance to reach you. Mature women college graduates interested in social work will be eligible. Those chosen to participate will be employed by the Boston Public Welfare Department as half-time paid social workers, working twenty hours a week.

We are asking your help in publicizing the program over the next few months. Will you let us come to one of your spring meetings to make a brief announcement of the project and give out some brochures? Perhaps we can be of help to you! If you are looking for a program for your next meeting, we would be pleased to give an informal talk on the Public Welfare system.

This is an unusual chance, we believe, for women to be employed

in the field of social work in a para-professional capacity. When the program gets underway, Catalyst in Social Work will recruit fifty women to begin work in September and October. The Catalyst staff will be responsible for an ongoing program of orientation, training and evaluation. The project hopes to demonstrate that mature women with college degrees but without special graduate training can help to alleviate the shortage of workers in public welfare.

It is a dramatic opportunity for concerned women to help our core city meet the demands of a rapidly changing world. Whether city or suburban based, women who want to work and use their knowledge of community problems, family budgets and child care have much to offer those in need of public assistance.

We hope you will help us to spread the word. We urge anyone interested in learning more about the program to call our office - (617) 442-8688. Thank you very much for your attention.

#8 - Mimeographed Announcement for Posting on Bulletin Boards

A dynamic new program for the mature college graduate who wants to combine homemaking with a part-time paid position in social welfare. This opportunity is being provided by means of a two-year demonstration project in Boston, beginning Fall, 1968, under the joint auspices of the Massachusetts Public Welfare Department and Catalyst in Social Work.

* An opportunity for college-educated women to help our core city meet its needs by using their knowledge of community problems, family budgets and child care to guide persons requiring public assistance.

* A degree in social work is not necessary...orientation and training will be provided by a professionally-trained staff.

* Each caseworker will be employed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare and will work in Boston for 20 hours a week. She will be eligible for Blue Cross, Blue Shield, life insurance benefits and vacation pay.

* A profound challenge for service...APPLY NOW!

For Further Information Contact:

Ruth S. Malenka (Mrs. Bertram J.)
Project Director
Catalyst in Social Work
Freedom House
14 Crawford Street
Roxbury, Massachusetts 02121
Telephone: (617) 442-8688

#9 - Poster for Window Display

Please Post

catalyst IN SOCIAL WORK

Freedom House
14 Crawford Street
Roxbury, Massachusetts 02121

COMBINE HOMEMAKING
with a
PART-TIME PAID POSITION
in
SOCIAL WORK

Married college graduates are now being recruited for a two-year demonstration project in the Boston Public Welfare Department.

A DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK IS NOT NECESSARY, PROFESSIONAL TRAINING WILL BE PROVIDED.

APPLY NOW!

For Further Information and Interview Contact:

Mrs. Ruth S. Malenka
Project Director
CATALYST IN SOCIAL WORK
Telephone: 442-8688